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DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

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August 18, 1963



Dear John:

Thank you for your letter of May 28, 1963, on improving intelligence collection capabilities in Africa. I certainly share the interest of the intelligence community in improving those capabilities to meet both present and future needs of the government.

It is my understanding that discussions are going forward among members of the intelligence community on the implementation of the bulk of the USIB recommendations. In this letter I am outlining the Department of State's action to date on the two recommendations on which your letter of May 28 focused.

The Department has continuously sought to increase diplomatic and consular representation in Africa. There are Embassies now in all 33 independent countries of the continent, as well as 26 consular posts in those countries and in the remaining dependent areas. The Department requested 103 additional personnel for African posts for FY 1964, but the House Committee on Appropriations has denied funds for these positions. At the same time, the Committee approved the establishment of five additional posts in Africa, to be staffed by drawing personnel from other posts. The Committee's disallowance of additional positions is being appealed. The Department will continue exerting every effort to expand diplomatic and consular representation in Africa, but it will be a while before we know exactly what can be done in this regard.

Late last year Defense provided the Department an Attache augmentation plan for Africa. I will not go into detail on this, since Secretary McNamara outlined the proposed expansion in his letter to you of July 9, 1963, which has been forwarded to me through USIB channels. When the plan was received, the Department sought the views of each of the interested missions in Africa on the augmentation, and there have been continuing discussions within the Department and between the Department and Defense on the problem.

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The Honorable John A. McCone,  
Chairman, United States Intelligence Board,  
Washington 25, D. C.

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There is no disagreement with the validity of the Defense Department's requirements for additional assets in Africa for the collection of military intelligence. In view of unstable conditions in many countries we are suggesting to Defense that in present and future collection efforts an objective which should be stressed is biographic information on the officer personnel of newly established armies of the independent African states. An intensive effort to become familiar with and to analyze the motivations, ambitions and capabilities of the various national African officer corps is certainly of key importance, in view of possible future military coups, and subversive movements.

Recognizing Defense's intelligence needs, the Department wishes to be as helpful as possible in assisting it to implement its attache staffing program for Africa in those cases in which military attache representation is justified and feasible. As of this time, a number of Defense's requests for attache offices have been agreed upon by the Department, and a few are now awaiting the approval of the host governments. In other areas, we are seeking to meet Defense's needs, at least partially, through dual accreditation.

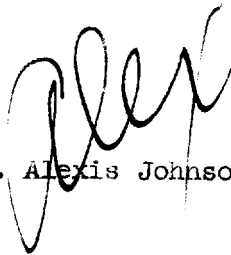
We find that the establishment of any new military representation in Africa must be reviewed carefully against the background of the political and psychological factors characteristic of the newly independent countries of Africa. These countries tend to be suspicious of the purposes of a Western military presence, and do not wish such a presence to suggest an identification in the East-West conflict which will subject them to Communist agitation or propaganda. Reflecting this sentiment, a few of the African countries have placed a limitation on the size of foreign diplomatic missions, thus precluding us from adding Service Attaches to our Embassies. In the same connection, some of our Ambassadors have urged that the size of their Embassies be limited whenever possible in order to avoid establishing a pattern which might obligate the host governments to accept sizable Soviet bloc missions. Finally, in a few instances the political sensitivities of the countries concerned make it inadvisable to raise the question of attache representation with them.

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The above factors illustrate the problems involved. In cases where the opening of Service Attache offices may be impossible at this time, changes in the political climate may permit such action in the not too distant future. The Department will continue to give this important matter priority attention.

Sincerely yours,

  
U. Alexis Johnson

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